



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
ECHO BATTERY, 1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION, 31<sup>ST</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY  
434<sup>TH</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY BRIGADE  
FORT SILL, OK 73503



ATSF-KJE

November 12, 2014

**MEMORANDUM FOR FAMILY OF ECHO BATTERY TRAINEES**

**REGARDING: Commander Introduction**

1. I would like to take a few moments to introduce myself. I am CPT Jacob E. Myers, your Soldier's Battery Commander (i.e. Boss) for his/her Basic Combat Training experience.
2. Your Soldier arrived safely at Fort Sill and has begun Basic Combat Training in E/1-31 FA and is part of Class number 09-15. During the 9 week training period (cycle) your Soldier will learn the basic skills that are required to fight, survive, and win on today's modern battlefield. The training will be very strenuous and demanding, but the tasks performed will help each Soldier develop the discipline and self-confidence necessary to become a successful Soldier in today's Army. I want you to know that the Cadre who will be training your Soldier are an extremely dedicated group of professionals and are genuinely concerned about the health, welfare, and training of each Soldier. We consider your Soldier to be the Army's most important asset, and I will personally ensure that we make your Soldier's Basic Combat Training experience both challenging and rewarding.
3. **Communication.** Don't fear- you will hear from your Soldier soon! By now, you should have already received a phone call from your Soldier. All Soldiers are given the opportunity to call home within the first 72 hours upon arrival to Fort Sill and normally once a week after the first four weeks of training are complete. However, please take note: phone calls home are a privilege and can be lost for poor performance and/or misconduct. I ask that you not attempt to contact your Soldier by phone. If there is anything that you should be concerned with regarding the health and welfare of your Soldier, the 1SG or I will personally let you know. Whether or not this is your Soldier's first time away from home, I am sure that your Soldier would love to hear from you! I strongly encourage you to write as often as possible. Please keep in mind that sometimes it might take some time for your mail to catch up to your Soldier. Our current mailing address is provided on the last page of this letter.
4. **Packages.** Packages are authorized but strongly discouraged—your Soldier can buy everything needed here at our local Post Exchange (Shopping Store). However, if you wish to send your Soldier a package. Please observe the following guidelines:
  - a. No alcohol or products containing alcohol, tobacco or narcotics.
  - b. No weapons, radio's, TV's, camera's, or other electronic devices
  - c. No pornographic or morally questionable materials
  - d. No magazines
  - e. No food items—I apologize for any hard feelings. However, it becomes a health and welfare issue in the Soldier bays and can lead to potential insect and rodent problems.
  - f. Key rule of thumb: when in doubt, just send a letter!

5. **Religious Services.** Your Soldier will have the opportunity to attend weekly religious services and Bible studies of various denominations. Soldiers are also permitted to seek counseling from an Army Chaplain who is on call 24 hours a day. Please note that while the freedom to practice one's own religion is absolutely supported, some practices may be counterproductive in the Basic Combat Training environment and will be discouraged for health and welfare reasons (e.g. certain lengths of fasting).
6. **Emergencies.** Should an emergency arise, the best means of notifying your Soldier is through your local American Red Cross. The field office in your area (the phone number can be found in your local phonebook) will contact the Lawton, Oklahoma field office, who will in turn contact me. In extreme cases, such as serious injury or death affecting immediate family members, an emergency leave of absence may be granted. Other leaves of absence during training are not normally authorized. If your soldier is injured during Basic Combat Training they will receive medical attention from the Reynolds Army Community Hospital located here at Ft. Sill. Additionally, Drill Sergeants are Combat Lifesaver qualified and carry medical aid kits. Depending on the nature and extent of the injury there is potential for a delay in graduation.
7. **Family Day and Graduation.** Family Day is typically held the day prior to Graduation. There will be a brief presentation and demonstration of key events that occur during Basic Combat Training. Soldiers will then be released on pass until 2000 hours (8:00 P.M.). The day after Family Day is Graduation. Graduation typically lasts an hour and is the formal induction of your Soldier into the United States Army. More information about both events will be released as the dates draw closer so you can make appropriate travel plans.
8. **Battery Webpage and Facebook Website.** I also wanted to take the time to reiterate the Battery Webpage. The Battery Link is: <https://www.facebook.com/E131Fa434FaBde?ref=hl> and our Facebook Website feed is on the website. Again, I encourage you to share this website with family, loved ones, and anyone else that would like to receive updates on your Soldier's progress through Basic Combat Training. Please feel free to use this as a link to the Battery and the other families. The website is used as a communication tool to better inform families and loved ones about training and upcoming events.
9. **Holiday Block Leave.** This class has the extraordinary opportunity to come home during the Holiday season. The dates for your Soldiers authorized leave period are 17 December 2014 to 2 January 2015. On November 18th, your Soldiers will be afforded the chance to begin the process of buying tickets for their leave period through a company provided by the Army. However, I encourage you to aid your Soldiers with this process. I will be allowing all of them to use their phones to contact back home to start this process. If you are buying tickets for your Soldiers, you MUST abide by the leave dates that have been authorized. Soldiers WILL NOT be given permission to leave any sooner than what is allotted; regardless if tickets were bought beforehand that are not within the authorized dates. Finally, Soldiers will have to report on or before the end date of leave; failure to arrive on time could result in administrative action and separation from the United States Army. Please allow your Soldiers to give you all the information regarding this travel period as they will be calling home soon.

10. **Closing.** Your Soldiers' platoon nicknames are given on the next page along with information on how to mail letters to him/her. The Battery's nickname is "Gladiators". If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask. I can be reached during normal duty hours at (580) 442-6859/0110; or through my email address: jacob.e.myers.mil@mail.mil. I look forward to working with you all—and meeting you on Graduation Day!

Respectfully,

JACOB E. MYERS  
CPT, FA  
Battery Commander

## **ECHO BTRY 1-31<sup>ST</sup> FA MAILING ADDRESS EXAMPLE**

